

February 15, 2002

Public Notice of 401 Water Quality Certification

**California Department of Transportation
Willow Creek Bridges Widening Project**

Humboldt County

On September 24, 2001, the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, North Coast Region received a Request for Water Quality Certification from the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) pursuant to administrative regulations and Federal Clean Water Act Section 401. The application covers disturbance to the waters of the United States associated with the widening of three bridges over Willow Creek on Highway 299 in Humboldt County.

The proposed work includes removing and replacing bridge rails and widening the bridges. Erosion control will be placed on all exposed slopes, and fill slopes will be planted with seedlings. A Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan will be implemented to minimize or eliminate sediment transport to Willow Creek and East Fork Willow Creek.

Caltrans will apply for a California Department of Fish and Game 1600 Streambed Alteration Agreement and a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Nationwide Permit No. 23 and 33. Caltrans signed a Categorical Exclusion Determination in July of 2000.

Regional Water Board staff has determined that if the proposed project is constructed in accordance with information submitted and in compliance with permit conditions, there will be minimal impacts on water quality. Staff is proposing to regulate this portion of the project under a conditional waiver of waste discharge requirements pursuant with Section 13269 of the California Water Code and Regional Water Board Resolution No. 87-113. Staff will consider all comments received during a 21-day comment period that ends on March 15, 2002.